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GIVEN BY

Hon. Josiah P. Quincy.





SPEECH

11 Sep 4 in 1841

OF

MR. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS,

ON THE CASE OF

ALEXANDER McLEOD.

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

SEPTEMBER 4, 1841.

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## SPEECH.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, SEPTEMBER 4, 1841.

MR. BOARDMAN, of Connecticut, after a call of the House, to which 165 members had responded, called for the yeas and nays on a motion yesterday made by him to lay on the table the following resolution :

*Resolved*, That the President of the United States be requested to inform this House, if not incompatible with the public interest, whether any officer of the army or the Attorney General of the United States has, since the 4th of March last, been directed to visit the State of New York for any purpose connected with the imprisonment or trial of Alexander McLeod ; and, if so, to communicate to this House copies of the instructions to, and report of, such officer ; and whether, by any Executive measures or correspondence, the British Government has been given to understand that Mr. McLeod will be released or surrendered.

MR. ADAMS requested Mr. BOARDMAN to withdraw his motion. He (Mr. A.) had not expected to address the House on the resolution, but as it appeared that the House had nothing else to do just now, if he could have an opportunity he would submit his views upon some of the topics which had been introduced into the discussion. He therefore asked his friend from Connecticut to withdraw his motion.

MR. BOARDMAN said he had yesterday made the motion to lay the resolution upon the table, because it had occupied the morning hour from the commencement of the session, and he was of opinion that the discussion had been continued as long as was profitable for the House or the country. But since he found that the honorable gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. ADAMS) desired to address the House, he had changed that opinion, and he would with great pleasure withdraw the motion, under the expectation, however, that the honorable gentleman would, upon concluding his remarks, renew the motion to lay the resolution on the table.

MR. ADAMS was understood to make a conditional promise to do so, if no gentleman desired to reply to remarks which he (Mr. A.) might make.

The motion to lay the resolution on the table was at length withdrawn.

MR. ADAMS said : Mr. Speaker : I have been of opinion that this resolution has occupied far more of the time of the People in this House than it ought, and had fully determined not to add to this superfluity of discussion one word of my own. But after coming into the House this morning, finding a motion pending to lay the resolution on the table, and the yeas and nays called upon that motion—perceiving, also, that the House have nothing else to do, a sudden impulse urges me, all unprepared, to ask the indulgence of the House to present some of my views upon the subject, and if they should prove desultory and disconnected, to overlook that infirmity without holding me to a rigorous adherence to the resolution itself, but allowing me to touch occasionally, at least, upon topics collaterally connected with it.

And first, I observe, that we have one great and most formidable issue of peace and war pending between us and Great Britain ; and the first question which occurs to me is, what is the object of this resolution ? for what purpose was it offered ? and for what purpose has the House been agitated with it from the very commencement of the session to this day ? The gentleman who offered the resolution disclaimed all party purposes—

he breathed in a lofty atmosphere, elevated high above that of party ; but what sort of comprehension had both the friends and the opponents of the resolution put upon it ? No party complexion ! Oh no ! [Laughter.] No ; it was patriotism !—pure patriotism !—patriotism pure and undefiled ! [Renewed laughter.] Well ; he was disposed to give gentlemen, on all sides of the House, credit for whatever patriotism they professed ; but sure it was that patriotism was a coat of many colors, and suited to very different complexions ; [laughter ;] and if it had not been for that unqualified profession of patriotism and no party which had rung through this House from every gentleman who had supported this resolution, he should have felt bound to believe it the rankest party measure that ever was introduced into the House. [A laugh.] For what is this resolution ? The United States are at this moment in a critical situation, in their relations of peace and war, with the most powerful nation on the face of the globe—a nation as, by the gentleman aimed at by this resolution, was most strikingly said, the tap of whose reveille drum, beginning with the rising sun, travels with him round the terraqueous globe. With this nation we have already one great and formidable question festering to an issue, and in which we are clearly right, and she is clearly wrong. Now I, for one, am not disposed to multiply issues with her, and most especially not for tendering to her an issue upon which we ourselves are wrong ; and upon which she is far better prepared for immediate aggression or defence than we are or can be. For upon that very border where this resolution tends to provoke hostile invasion, she is armed up to the eyes, while we are all but defenceless. She has stationed there in military array an army nearly double in number to the whole army of the United States—an army well appointed and ready to strike at a word. And you have a line of States and a populous border, with nothing but a river between them and that British army, who, at a signal from their commander, could sweep through a thousand miles of your country with fire, and sword, and desolation, and fall back into their strongholds beyond the river, almost before the knowledge of their incursion could reach this metropolis of your country.

Now, with regard to the Northeastern Boundary, the right is *all* on our side, and the wrong wholly on the side of Great Britain. We can concede nothing. Our right must be maintained—peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must. For I say to this House, that from the bottom of my soul I believe we ought, if called upon and required, to put forth our whole strength, and sacrifice the blood and treasure of this nation to maintain our rights upon that issue. With regard to the other question, I would say that I am not disposed to make unnecessary additional issues upon matters which have no immediate connexion with that ; for I believe that the award of impartial judges would be against us. What is the object of this resolution ? It is to make an issue with Great Britain—an issue of right or wrong upon the affair of the burning of the *Caroline*. No, sir ; never shall my voice be for going to war upon that issue. I hold it, in the first place, as a maxim, that American statesmen ought, before engaging their country in a war with Great Britain, to be extremely careful not to multiply issues with that country. We have now one which is full enough to exercise us for years to come, and the cost is much more than I am willing to speak of at this time, and that issue must come, as I believe. I certainly would not avoid it by any sacrifice of any kind. But while I say that, I will not multiply the issues ; and more especially I will not add to that



issue other issues, upon which, when we go to a third Power to arbitrate upon it, they will say we are wrong. Go to war, and the fair fields of the State of New York may be deluged in blood. The State of New York may be ransacked by foreign enemies, and irreparable injury will be done to its people. And if the issue must be terminated with peace, as it must be, either by negotiation between the parties themselves, or through a third Power, the issue will be decided against us. We shall be told by any other nation that it is not the thing for us to quarrel about.

I have not the time, if I were possessed of the information, to give a history of the affair of the *Caroline*; and it is known as much to every member of the House as it is to me. We have heard a great deal of talk about territorial rights, and independence, and of State rights. But in a question of that kind other nations do not look much to your State rights, nor to your independence questions. They will not talk of your independence; but they will say who is right and who wrong? Who struck the first blow, I take it, will be the main question with them. I take it that the late affair of the *Caroline* was in hostile array against the British Government, and that the parties concerned in it were employed in acts of war against it; and I do not subscribe to the very learned opinion of the Chief Justice of the State of New York, (not, I hear, the Chief Justice, but a Judge of the Supreme Court of that State,) that there was no act of war committed. Nor do I subscribe to it that every nation goes to war only on issuing a declaration or proclamation of war. This is not the fact. Nations often wage war for years without issuing any declaration of war. The question is not here upon a declaration of war, but acts of war. And I say that, in the judgment of all impartial men of other nations, *we* shall be held as a nation responsible; that the *Caroline*, there, was in a state of war against Great Britain; for purposes of war, and the worst kind of war, to sustain an insurrection—I will not say rebellion, because rebellion is a crime, and because I heard them talked of as “patriots.” Yes, and I have heard, in the course of the discussion here, these patriots represented as carrying on a righteous cause, and that we ought to have assisted them; that we ought to have given them that assistance that a nation fighting for its liberty is entitled to from the generosity of other nations. Well, admit that merely for a moment. If we were bound to do it, we were bound to do it avowedly and above board; but we disclaimed all intention of taking any part in it. And yet there was very little disguise about this expedition, and that this vessel was there for the purposes of hostility against the Canadian Government. I say, therefore, that we struck the first blow; and if, instead of pressing this matter to a war, we were to refer it to a third Power, even if it should be to a European Republic, if any such thing is remaining, and should say there had been an invasion of our territory, they would ask us a question something like that which was put to a character in a play of Moliere—*Que diable allait il faire dans cette galère?* “What the d—l had he to do in that galley?” [Great laughter.]

Now, I think the arbitrator would say, “What the d—l had you to do with that steamboat?” They would say that we struck the first blow. Now, admit that—and none of your State rights men can deny it—admit that, and all the rest follows of course. They will say it was wrong—abstractly, if you please. Talking of abstractions, it was wrong for an expedition to come over and burn the steamboat, and send her over the falls. But what was your steamboat about? What had she been doing? What

was she to do the next morning? And what ought *you* to do? You have reparation to make for all the men and for all the arms and implements of war which we were transporting and going to transport to the other side, to foment and instigate rebellion in Canada. That is what the third party would say to us. And it would come, in the end, after all the blood and treasure had been wasted by a war between the two countries, to this: that we must shake hands and drink champagne together, after having made a mutual apology for mutual transgression. That is the way things are settled between individuals. "If you said so, why, I said so;" and thus the dispute is amicably settled. So we should have to do with this national matter; for there is not any great difference, in the essentials of quarrelling and of making up, between nations and individuals. See a fight in the street between two boys, who give each other bloody noses, and, when the question comes to be settled between them, the basis of the settlement is, who gave the first blow? And the award of any honest umpire is, after suffering the parties to fight it out, that he who struck the first blow was in the wrong. And so it is with nations. Why, then, are you talking of State rights and of independence in connexion with this question? It has nothing to do with it.

There is, sir, another point of view in which I object to this resolution. I have seen here, in another part of this building, to which it would not be in order to refer except indirectly, although I did hear, the other day, such a dressing of this House in that body that I thought I almost had a right to get up and *protest* against it. But I will not refer to the matter except in terms which come within the rules of order. I have heard there, and seen in the newspapers out of doors, a prodigious affair made of this matter, as if the Government of the United States had outraged the State of New York—because the great Empire State of New York had undertaken to say that she would *hang* McLeod, whatever Great Britain or the General Government might do. Yes! whatever they might do, the great Empire State of New York would hang McLeod! That was the language. What, sir, I ask, is the object of this resolution? To inquire of the President of the United States whether any officer of the army, or the Attorney General of the United States, since the 4th of March last, had visited the State of New York for any purpose connected with the trial of Alexander McLeod?

I believe that question was answered before it was asked. I think the information was contained in a document communicated by the President of the United States, which stated not only that a General was sent, but that instructions were given to the Attorney General; and the instructions themselves were communicated to Congress, with the President's message, at the very commencement of the session.

Why, then, should this House be occupied hour after hour in discussing whether the Attorney General was sent to New York, and what he was about there, when the President himself has told you that he was sent and the object of his mission?

Every body knew it before the question was asked. What then? Has not the President a right to send the Attorney General to New York on that or any other subject? Where is the constitutional provision prohibiting him from sending the Attorney General to New York on that or any other of the subjects which are before the judicial courts of that State? Yes, the Attorney General has been sent there, and we have his instructions. And I



have heard here, on the part of some of my forty friends from New York, a great deal about the conscious dignity and honor of this *Empire State* of New York. I am not very fond of that term "Empire State," in the language of this Union; and I say that if there is an "Empire" State in this Union, it is Delaware. To be magniloquent and talk about the Empire State may well become the forty gentlemen who represent the State on this floor, having reference to their own numbers and the numbers of their constituents, or to the extent, fertility, and beauty of her soil; yet this is a distinction not recognised in the Constitution of the United States. They are all, as members of this Union, equal; and the State of Delaware has as good a right to be called the "Empire State" as New York. Now, if my forty friends from New York choose to call it the Empire State, I will not quarrel with them. It is only as to consequences that I enter my caveat against the too frequent use of those terms on this floor; for there is meaning in those words "Empire State," when used among co-estates, more than meets the ear. Suppose it was in Delaware that such an event had occurred, do you suppose my friend here [Mr. RODNEY] from Delaware would have offered such a resolution as this? And, by the terms of the resolution, I should presume that my friends from New York think there is a little more dignity and power in having forty Representatives than only one.

But there is another point of view in which I ask the attention of the House to this resolution. At the very time when we have this great issue upon another point with the British nation, and when this resolution, and every thing connected with it, is blowing the coals to make another issue, there is behind it another effort to make yet another issue between this Government and the State of New York. What is the object of that? Are you going to war with a foreign nation? And is that a time to split hairs in questions of jurisdiction between the Government of the United States and that of one of the separate States? And are you going to bring up the question, "Which of the two has the right, the precious right, to hang McLeod?" Are you going to make an issue between the State of New York and the Government of the United States upon such an exercise of power as that? Are you going to show your *weakness* at the very moment when you are bearding the lion in his den? Is that the time to make an issue between the Government, which represents the whole country, and a State as to its power? God forbid that I should question its power; but I inquire, is it politic or wise to make a quarrel between that Government and this, about the most insignificant of all questions, as to which of you shall *release* McLeod? For, while some gentlemen talk about hanging McLeod, others, more merciful, tell us that if it should turn out that this man was concerned in the affair of the Caroline, yet that there was a power in the State of New York that might prevent his execution—that the Executive of New York had the power of pardoning as well as the General Government, and that the attribute of mercy would be exercised with as much discretion by the Governor of New York as it would be by the President of the United States. But I see nothing in the correspondence which has been laid before us that would lead to the conclusion that the course of the law in New York would not be carried out, according to all its rights, and all its dignities, and the man be released without the necessity of a resort to the authority of the General Government.

I am perfectly satisfied, for my own part, if it should so happen that the evidence is strong enough to convict him, that the Governor of New York

would exercise the pardoning power, and send him with an admonition to go and sin no more. That can be done without any entrenchment on the honor and dignity of the State of New York. From the first moment to the last, the question which has struck me is, whether you will or will not hang the man? That is the only question in issue between Great Britain and the United States. Great Britain will not go to war to settle a question of jurisdiction between the General Government and the State of New York. They will not go to war with you if the man is sent home. But, after all the arguments which have been used on this floor, it ultimately comes to this: which of the two Governments shall release McLeod? Now, I say, what is all that for? Why is it that the Government of the United States must be arraigned by the Government of the State of New York, and this made a question of war between us and Great Britain? Why should not the matter have been allowed to go on according to the correspondence between the two Governments? No, sir, we have had long dissertations about war, declared and not declared, lawful and unlawful, by a judge of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, and here and elsewhere; long dissertations in relation to the maintenance of State rights. And now what does it amount to? Suppose you carry your State rights into execution; suppose you hang the man, then the People of New York will exclaim: "There is our independence; there are our State rights; you see that we have hung the man." Now, what next, I would ask the constituents of the gentleman who offered this resolution. When all the counties he represents are ravaged by the enemy, and when thousands and tens of thousands have been slaughtered, wives have been made widows and their children fatherless, I would then ask of him if he would have the thanks of his constituents? And the question I ask of him, I also ask of the Representatives of the State of New York; of the Representatives of the State of Pennsylvania; of the Representatives of the State of Ohio; and of the whole line of those States which are more liable to the incursions which would take place by the enemy without any declaration of war, who would come and butcher your people, and burn and destroy your property, and return immediately and take their places in their defences before you could raise and organize a force to save them. What would you do? Would you offer a resolution to inquire whether an officer of the army had been sent there, or whether the Attorney General had been sent there, or whether any concession had been made to the British Government? No such question would be asked. I have, indeed, no doubt that after the country had been ravaged, there would be vigor and bravery enough in it to raise and array an avenging host to invade in turn the enemy's country, and burn their property and destroy their wives and children too; and what satisfaction would that be to you?

If gentlemen would look into the history of Scotland and England, they would there find numerous accounts of the frightful and disastrous border wars that were carried on between the Scotch and the English. Gentlemen would there see what might be the consequences here if this resolution were to be carried into effect.

It is but a few days since I heard a gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. EASTMAN) say, with some pain and distress, that if the present Secretary of State remained in office there would be no war—no war with England; and there was a great deal meant by that remark. And the gentleman seemed to think this a lamentable condition of affairs. I firmly



believed it was true; but I had a very different feeling from that gentleman; and I say, God be praised if it be so, to preserve peace between the two countries. And, however long or short the gentleman's career may be, he will not see any improper concession to Great Britain sanctioned by the present Secretary of State, whether in peace or war. With respect to the present question, I have no doubt the gentleman alluded to would show as much firmness as any member of this House. And one of my reasons for troubling the House at this last expiring moment of the session is, that I might vindicate the conduct of that gentleman, and do him justice; for great injustice has been done him in regard to his remarks and correspondence. Now, I do not know that there is a word in his part of that correspondence but what I would endorse. And I say, if it is conciliatory, if it has any tendency to soften the asperities and rancor that may exist between the two countries, so much the better; and I know it has had that effect. What did you hear when you saw a report of a different character? Why, your minister at the Court of St. James was panic struck, and sent a message to your squadron in the Mediterranean to run away—to fly as fast as the winds could blow them—for John Bull was at their heels! [Laughter.] It is very much the fashion to say, "He did nothing more than his duty." The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. INGERSOLL) spoke of this transaction, the other day, just as I would speak of it in general terms; but he did not at all question the propriety of the conduct of that gentleman. I say, not so. I say that he has disgraced this nation more than we have ever been disgraced since the *affair* of the Chesapeake frigate. What will the Germans, what will the Italians, what, in short, will all the great nations of Europe say of the People of the United States? That, upon a panic terror of their minister at London, they showed the white feather, and their line of battle ship in the Mediterranean was warned to seek refuge by flight from the thunders of Britain!

And there is another point of view in which I do not approve his conduct. The gentleman has been at London four or five years. I do not believe there was at London a chargé from any country in Europe but knew better what was done and doing in the Privy Council. What is the business of a foreign minister abroad, but to find out what is doing? I will venture to say that if Christopher Hughes had been at London as our minister, he never would have written such a letter. He would have *known* that there was no order of Council to authorize hostilities; and there cannot be hostilities without an order of the Privy Council. I speak from experience when I say that Mr. Hughes would have been informed of such orders in Council, had they been issued, and of course would not have been frightened by every newspaper explosion of popular wrath into a belief that the grave and responsible Council of the nation had resorted to such an extremity at such a moment.

There was one memorable case of the address of Mr. Hughes in procuring documents of the profoundest secrecy. Mr. Stratford Canning came to me one day, and said that he had permission to read to me a paper of great importance, emanating from his Government in their negotiations with the European alliance. He read the paper accordingly, and, when he had finished, I asked him if he would let me have it for half an hour, that I might lay it before the President, Mr. Monroe, for his perusal. He said he was forbidden to let it go out of his own hands; but that, if I desired, he would go with me to the President's house, and read it to him. This



I declined, but contented myself with making, from memory, a verbal statement of its contents to Mr. Monroe, and within three days after I received a copy of that same paper from Christopher Hughes. The next time Mr. Canning came to the Department, I said to him that he needed not to have been so strait-laced about that despatch which he would not allow me to take for half an hour to the President for his perusal, for we now had a copy of it. He was amazed. A copy of it? said he. He clapped his hands on his two waistcoat pockets, took the key of his desk out of one of them, held it up, and said: That is the key to a good lock; and that paper has been under that lock and key every moment since I received it, except when in my own hands. I said, do not suspect any one about you. We are not in the habit of purchasing secret papers from domestics or secretaries. We have got it from a great distance.

Yes, I had a copy of that document, perhaps the most secret as well as the most efficient of the diplomatic papers which passed between the parties to the Holy Alliance, and it was procured with many others by Mr. Hughes, by no improper arts and at no cost of secret service money, but by the art of making friends by his social qualities wherever he goes. I mention this to show what ought to be the qualities of a public minister abroad. If a minister is in the habit of friendly, social intercourse with the other members of the diplomatic corps at the same court, with an ordinary portion of sagacity, he has the key to all their secrets. I say it from long knowledge and experience. How was it when this panic letter was written to the commodore of the American squadron? What did the American minister know of the system of policy, foreign or domestic, of the British cabinet? The letter itself proves that he was as blind to it as a beetle; that he was ignorant of the first letters of their alphabet. If he had known any thing of it, he would not have disgraced himself and his country by the exposure of his ignorance. I say this not from any personal feeling towards that gentleman, although I have not been an admirer of some of his diplomatic exhibitions heretofore, as the journals of this House may show; but I have looked to this transaction entirely upon its merits alone, and I say that those letters written to the commodore of the squadron in the Mediterranean, and their consequences, have been disgraceful to the nation; and I, for one, hold the man responsible for it, and say he was not doing his duty, or that he neglected some of the most important parts of his duty as a public minister. But this is somewhat of a digression, and yet intimately connected with this McLeod question of peace and war; for what must the Privy Council and her Majesty Queen Victoria herself, who, I dare say, all woman as she is, has more fire in her heart than ever to have sitten down and written a letter like that—what must that Privy Council have thought when they first heard of it? They would say, God grant that this man may remain here as Jonathan's minister till the end of time; we may be sure he never will know any thing of our real intentions, and will always have a becoming reverence for the terrors of the beak and lightning of the eye of the British eagle, and blundering rashness enough to put out the eyes of his own.

To return to the subject of this resolution, and as to whether the British Government have been given to understand that McLeod will be released or surrendered. What, I ask again, is the purpose of this inquiry? For this question, too, has been answered before it was asked. Undoubtedly the British Government have been given to understand that he will be re-

leased or surrendered. Whether this shall be done by the authority of the United States or by that of the State of New York may be a question of constitutional power among ourselves, but it is no question between us and Great Britain. In negotiation, the Government of the United States is that which the British nation have the right to hold and will hold responsible for his personal safety. Undoubtedly the British minister has been told that "the Government of the United States entertains no doubt that, after this avowal of the transaction as a public transaction, authorized and undertaken by the British authorities, individuals concerned in it ought not, by the principles of public law and the general usages of civilized States, to be holden personally responsible in the ordinary tribunals of law for their participation in it."

Undoubtedly the instructions given to the Attorney General when sent to New York, and a copy of which was communicated to Mr. Fox, did aver that, "whether the process be criminal or civil, the fact of having acted under public authority, and in obedience to the orders of lawful superiors, must be regarded as a valid defence ; otherwise, individuals would be holden responsible for injuries resulting from the acts of Government, and even from the operations of public war."

Yes, sir, the British Government have been given to understand that since their avowal that McLeod acted under their authority, he must be ultimately released or surrendered. And what then? Is it not so? Why, sir, Indian savages—cannibals, to whom revenge is the first of virtues—accept of ransom for the blood of their relatives slain ; and is it for a Christian nation, in cold blood, four years after a defensive irregularity of border war, provoked by their own people, to hold a man responsible to their municipal law for *murder*, because the life of a man was lost in a nocturnal foray, authorized by the public authorities, civil and military, of the country in whose defence it was undertaken and achieved? Sir, there is not a civilized country upon earth but would cry shame upon us for carrying such barbarian principles into practice. A war provoked by such an act would be a war of extermination—a war of merciless butchery ; and the scene of its first unutterable sufferings would be the very border of our own country, upon which we should bring down this judgment of Heaven.

I ask every member of this House to put himself in the position of being a prisoner in a foreign land for an act done by the orders of his Government—for the burning of a boat or the killing of men : I ask every man here to put himself in the situation of McLeod, either in Great Britain or any part of the British dominions, and suppose it a matter of negotiation between the two Governments—what would they say if the British Secretary of State, from a representation that this was done by the orders of the Government of the United States, and that the nation held itself responsible for the act—the British Secretary of State would say, "of course ultimately we shall release him?" Now, I would ask if this would be disgraceful to the British nation? It would have been directly the contrary—that there is no descending from the dignity, and rights, and independence of a nation, in admitting the principle that the authority of a nation covers as with a mantle the deeds of individuals performed under it ; and that, if arrested upon civil or criminal process for it, there must be some mode of obtaining their release. I say that the minister of no nation upon earth would be ashamed of making such a declaration as that. And now carry this correspondence to the utmost extent. What is it more? How does it compromit

this country? It does not take McLeod out of the State of New York. It never pretended to arrest the operation of the law. The British minister has been given to understand that it is a question between the two nations, and that the General Government, as you and I, have a deep interest in the stake as well as New York; and that, if it should come to hostilities, it is not for the Empire State of New York to carry on the war with Great Britain. No; it is a question for which the honor of the whole nation is pledged, and therefore the Government of the United States has a right to speak upon it. Now, I ask why is this question raised, as it is raised in this resolution, between the Government of the United States and the Government of the State of New York? It is the easiest thing in the world to do what the Constitution of the United States and the Constitutions of the several States intended to do above all other things; that is, that each of them shall discharge its own duties, passing along in parallel lines, without crossing each other's path. And the course taken by the United States is calculated for that. After commenting as I have done, upon the effects produced in foreign lands by a report of this House, so famous and notorious as it was last winter, I ask you what has been the counteracting effect of this very correspondence? The effect has been to calm the irritation of the British Government, roused as it had been to indignation and resentment by that inflammatory report. This effect is apparent in the tone of Mr. Peel's speech to his constituents at Tamworth. I have no doubt that Mr. Fox represented the thing in that light, and, from the complexion of these communications, he represented that there was no spirit of hostility to Great Britain on the part of this Government. I say it is one of the best papers that ever was written, and the effect of it upon the nation is to be one of glory and not of reproach. Sir, it has fully authenticated the saying of the gentleman from New Hampshire, that you will not have a war with England while the present Secretary of State shall remain in office. I believe it. I thank God it is so; and your constituents, and my constituents, and the constituents of the gentleman from New Hampshire—those of the gentleman from New York who offered this resolution—ay, sir, the constituents of every member of this House, have great reason to raise their hands in joy and gratitude to the God of Mercy that it is so, and in supplication that it may be so still; for, were it otherwise—

The child may rue that is unborn  
The sentence of that day.

As to this resolution—[here several members rose and addressed the Speaker, who gave notice to Mr. ADAMS that the hour had expired. Several members moved that he should have leave to proceed; other voices were heard—"Move to lay it on the table."] Mr. ADAMS said, for my own part I should prefer to take a direct vote upon the resolution, and record my name upon the Journal, "no." [Several voices, "Move the previous question!"] Mr. ADAMS. Upon the whole, to lay on the table is a milder negative; and so, if no member wishes to reply to me, I move to lay the resolution on the table.

It was laid on the table by yeas and nays—109 to 70.











